



Disaster Resistant Times

Shenandoah Valley Project Impact

Citizen Corps Council and CERT Team Newsletter



December 2004

Coordinator's Corner

This is the time of year for reflection. Reflection about events of the past year and challenges the upcoming year will bring. When I look back over all that Shenandoah Valley Project Impact (SVPI) was able to accomplish this year, I know that it was due to the efforts and hard work of our Citizen Corps Council and CERT volunteers, and our member organizations. Partnership is the one word that describes SVPI perfectly. Shenandoah Valley residents are learning to become "disaster resistant" because a wonderful group of people are willing to come together to contribute towards a common goal. 2005 promises to be a challenging year. We face federal budget cuts and limited funding opportunities in light of terrorism concerns and an upcoming hurricane season predicted to be even more active than 2004 (yes, more active). But I am confident that our disaster education and outreach activities will continue to grow because of the strong core of individuals and organizations that make up Project Impact. A heart-felt **thank-you** to each of you for your support and efforts. I look forward to working with all of you in the year ahead.

- Rebecca Joyce, SVPI Coordinator

**"Teamwork is the fuel that allows
common people to attain
uncommon results"**

- Andrew Carnegie



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Holiday Safety Tips



Fireplaces: Have chimneys inspected and cleaned every year. Use a sturdy screen when burning fires. Never burn paper or pine boughs which can float up the chimney and ignite your roof or a neighboring home.

Candles: Keep candles away from decorations or other combustible items. Never leave children unattended with candles. Never display lighted candles in windows or near exits.

Tree Trimmings: Use only lights tested by a laboratory. Never use candles to decorate trees. Don't overload outlets. Always unplug all lights before leaving or going to bed.

Christmas Trees: Choose fresh trees and secure in sturdy stands, place trees away from heat sources and exits. Water daily and choose artificial trees that are fire retardant.

Stockings: Hang only on mantles of fireplaces that will not be used.

Shopping: Keep a watch out for people standing near you in the checkout line at retail stores, restaurants, grocery stores, etc. who have a camera cell phone in hand. With a camera cell phone, they can take a picture of your credit card, which gives them your name, number, and expiration date. This type of identification theft is one of the fastest growing scams today.

Red Cross To Offer Classes

This Winter, the American Red Cross of the Blue Ridge will be offering the classes listed below. For more information or to register for classes, please contact them at 540-886-9151 or by email at acsforrest@yahoo.com.

Standard First Aid (Includes CPR) \$40

Saturday, January 22: 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 26: 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Adult CPR \$30

Tuesday, January 11: 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 8: 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

First Aid \$25

Wednesday, January 12: 6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 9: 6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.



Do You Know Your Winter Precipitation?

Blizzard - Winds over 35 miles per hour with blowing snow.

Blowing Snow - Snow which is blown around by the wind making it hard to see and piling into drifts.

Flurries - Light snow falling for short durations.

Freezing Rain - Rain that falls onto surfaces with a temperature below freezing forming a coating of ice.

Showers - Snow falling at varying intensities for brief periods.

Sleet - Rain that freezes into ice pellets before reaching the ground.

Squalls - Snowstorms which have heavy snow showers and only last for a short time. They also have strong, gusty winds. Large amounts of snow may accumulate on the ground. They are most often seen near the Great Lakes Region.

2004 Hurricane Season Wrap-up

This year we had a very active Hurricane Season. Here is a summary of what the Season brought. **Sixteen** tropical or subtropical storms formed in the North Atlantic. **Nine** of these storms became hurricanes. **Six** of the hurricanes became major hurricanes (Category 3 or higher). The **strongest** hurricane was Ivan which reached Category 5 status. **Six** hurricanes: Alex, Charley, Frances, Gaston, Ivan, and Jeanne and three tropical storms struck the United States. Atlantic tropical systems were directly responsible for more than **3000** deaths in 2004. A majority of the deaths occurred in Haiti due to the rains from Jeanne. 2004 is the **costliest** hurricane season on record with unadjusted property damage in the U.S. estimated at **42 billion** dollars. **Charley** is the second costliest hurricane on record and **Ivan** is the third costliest hurricane on record. Here in the Shenandoah Valley we were lucky and only experienced some minimal flooding from the rains as some of the tropical systems moved through, unlike 2003 when parts of our Region were hit by Hurricane Isabel. The hurricane activity of this year reinforces the importance for all of us to be prepared each hurricane season and to have a family disaster plan in place.

A Thank You
To All Of Our
CERT Instructors
Who Taught Classes
During Our Fall 2004 Session



Mickey Cochran
Minday Craun
Steve Funkhouser
Bunny Hearn
Dave Hilley
Robin Massie
Tom Rose
Karen Will



Jack Frost has already begun “nipping at our noses” and more severe winter weather may be just around the corner. Below are some tips to help you prepare for the winter season. Check out the Virginia Department of Emergency Management's Website at www.vaemergency.com for additional information.

Staying Healthy In Extreme Cold

Extreme cold temperatures pose a substantial danger during the winter months. Prolonged exposure to the cold can cause frostbite, hypothermia, or even death. Persons most susceptible to extreme cold are infants and the elderly.

Recommended winter attire - Wear loose fitting, lightweight, warm clothing in several layers (the trapped air between the layers insulates). Layers can be removed to avoid perspiration and subsequent chill. Outer garments should be tightly woven, water repellent and hooded. Wear a hat (half of body heat is lost through the top of the head). Cover the mouth with scarves to protect lungs from cold air. Mittens, snug at the wrists, are better than gloves. Gloves allow your fingers to cool much faster than mittens do. Try to stay dry. Do not stay outside for extended periods.

Be Aware! Cold weather puts a strain on your heart, even without exercise. Be careful when shoveling snow, pushing a car or performing other strenuous tasks. Regardless of your age or physical condition, avoid over exertion in the winter.

Prepare For Winter Power Outages

This year's winter season could produce storms that cause power outages. Many people may have to turn to non-electric alternative heat sources. Please keep the following in mind:

Fireplace and **wood stove** chimneys should be inspected annually and cleaned if necessary.

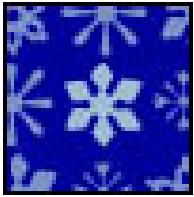
Keep **kerosene** and **propane heaters** at least three feet away from furniture, blankets and other flammable objects. Never set the heater on a chair or table. It should sit only on an uncarpeted floor. Keep an eye on your heater at all times while it is running. Shut it off before you go to bed or when you leave the house. Wait for a heater to cool before refueling it.

Generators should always be operated outdoors. **Do not** operate generators in any space that is enclosed or partially enclosed like a garage, crawl space or basement.

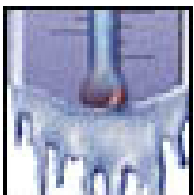
Make Sure Your Disaster Kit Is Ready For Winter

Now is the perfect time to make sure your disaster kit is well-stocked for the winter season. Here's what to include:

- 3 to 5 day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil. Include a can opener.
- One change of clothing and footwear and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A first aid kit, medications and copies of prescriptions.
- Battery powered radio, flashlights, and extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys, a credit card, and cash in small bills.
- Sanitation supplies such as soap and toilet paper.
- Special items for infants, the elderly, and persons with special needs.
- Important family documents in a waterproof container.



Winter Travel Tips



The safest place to be during a winter storm is indoors. Winter driving is often very difficult due to blowing snow, icy slick spots and fewer daylight hours. If you must drive, follow these tips for a safe trip.

Maintenance

To minimize the possibility of breakdown, winterize your vehicle following the suggested maintenance schedule included in the owner's manual, or have your vehicle serviced by a reputable dealer, garage, or mechanic.

Check your wipers, tires (use all-weather tires, if possible), lights, and fluid levels regularly. Make sure the brakes and transmission are working properly. Lubricate door and trunk locks with lock lubricant to prevent them from freezing.

On The Road

Buckle your seat belts!

Brake properly to avoid skids. If the pavement is snow or ice covered, start slowly and brake gently. Begin braking early when you come to an intersection. If you start to slide, ease off the gas pedal or brakes. Steer into the direction of the skid until you feel you have regained traction, then straighten your vehicle. If you have anti-lock brakes, apply steady pressure.

Be prepared to turn back and seek shelter if conditions become threatening.

In fog, drive with headlights set on dim, or use fog lights. If fog is too dense, pull off the roadway and stop. Do not drive dangerously slow. In rain, fog, snow, or sleet, stay within the limits of your vision.

As roadway conditions may vary depending on the sun, shade or roadway surface, watch for slick spots. Be prepared to react physically and mentally.

Be alert for snow plows. When a snow plow is coming towards you, allow plenty of room for the plow to pass; its blade may cross the center line. When you approach a snow plow from behind, pass with care and only when you can see the road ahead of the plow.

If You Become Stranded

If your vehicle breaks down, pull as far off the road as possible. Your greatest personal danger at this point is that of being hit by passing cars. Stay in the car. You may become disoriented and lost while wandering in a snowstorm, making it more difficult for rescuers to find you. If you have a cell phone, call for help.

Display a trouble sign. Tie a piece of brightly colored cloth (red is good) to your car's antenna as a distress signal.

Occasionally run the engine to keep warm. Turn on your car's engine for 10 minutes each hour. Run the heater during this time. If it is dark, turn on your car's interior light to make it easier for rescuers to find you.

Be aware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Clear away snow from the exhaust pipe and open a downwind window slightly for ventilation. Also avoid overexertion. Cold weather puts added strain on the heart.